



Vol. CCI No. 5245

## THE LONDON CHARIVARI

September 17 1941

### *Charivaria*

A TOKYO newspaper recently stated that HITLER will lose. This editor should go far. In fact he has probably started.



sign for "Sh." Since when has Mr. SHAW taken any notice of anybody who said "Sh"?

There is little likelihood of extra taxes being imposed during the present financial year, says Sir KINGSLEY Wood. Taxpayers will be surprised to learn that there are any taxes left.

#### **Beauty at the Trough**

"A dozen members of Accrington W.V.S. have been awarded their B certificates for communal feeding."—*Northern Paper*.

An egg in a London shop was found to have a distinct clock-face marked on the shell with the hands pointing at 11.30. That's all very well as far as it goes. But what month?

Growing discontent among the German people is reported. HITLER may attempt to remedy this by offering them a Friendship Pact.

A lemon recently disappeared from a London cocktail bar and members of the staff were searched without result. Then the answer was a customer.

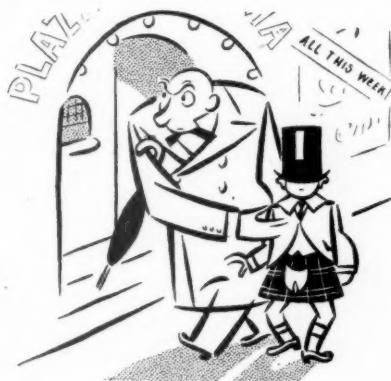
A London doctor types his prescriptions. He is said to be sensitive about his legible handwriting.

We gather from a Stockholm message that Herr HITLER is to make another speech at the German people.



A London tobacconist is assisted in the shop by his six-year-old son. The lad fits snugly under the counter ready to hand up cigarettes for regular customers.

When the dictators met on a recent occasion they dispensed with the services of an interpreter as the DUCE is a fluent listener in German.



#### **Your Joke, Partner**

"Hitler's chief Fifth Columnist in the Far East, Gen. Eugen Ott, Ambassador to Japan, is failing in his efforts to bring Pacific affairs to boiling point."

*Daily Telegraph.*

A police chief reports a slight increase in juvenile crime in Scotland. Aberdonians attribute this to the pernicious influence of the cinema posters.

## Cairo Weather

**B**LUE skies at morning, and egrets white and gay  
Flying up a glassy Nile . . . What a lovely day!  
Kingfishers are hovering, camels take the sun.  
Shepherd's terrace . . . Now's the time for a little one!  
All the Cairo coppers in their suits of spotless white;  
Sun and shade the amateur photographer's delight.  
Donkey-carts and melons, *gharris* clopping by,  
Swimming at Gezireh, and again blue sky.  
*Gorgeous weather, isn't it?* Think of English rain,  
Cricket matches cancelled, dripping windowpane,  
Wet grass, mackintosh, mist and fog,  
Tennis rackets snapping, and a snapping wet dog!  
Here they flood the cricket-grounds two days a week,  
And the weather is a thing of which people never  
speak.  
Who'd exchange conditions, the cloudy for the bright?

Well, English folk in Cairo would . . . and wish to God  
they might.

○ ○

## I Have Been a Nazi Agent.

**F**OR the last twenty-four hours I have been a spy. I determined to test for myself the efficacy of the methods taken in this country to guard Service and Production secrets from the prying eyes of foreign agents.

*The results astounded me.*

Not far from the important town of X is a military camp. I walked up to the gates hatless and carrying a camera and



"Excuse me—how d'you spell 'education'?"

two pairs of compasses. The sentry, who was eating an apple, stuck it on the end of his bayonet and asked me what I wanted. I said I wanted to see the commanding officer.

The sentry consulted a calendar and said: "He's having a bath."

"Be so good, then," I replied, "as to direct me to the Officers' Mess."

No effort was made to search me or to question my *bona fides* beyond a request that I should sign my name in the Visitors' Book. This I did, adding under "Purpose of Visit" the single word

### ESPIONAGE.

For half an hour I strolled about the camp, unescorted and unchallenged. I entered a shed and examined an instrument of a kind entirely unknown to me. It is no part of my purpose to reveal any facts which might be of use to an enemy, but there can be no harm in saying that the apparatus was of iron or steel, cylindrical and of massive construction. A sandbag was suspended from an outlet (or inlet, I am unable to say which) in the lower front, and above this a hinged door was closely sealed. The machine appeared to be powered by a pipe or cable at the back, running thence through a hole in the wall out of sight, but a large handle fitted at the side suggested a secondary or emergency method of operation.

I was about to withdraw when a hissing noise as of water forced through a narrow aperture arrested my attention and I decided to remain and await developments. A soldier came in, gave me a casual glance and *without the slightest attempt at concealment* lifted a lid, which I had failed to observe, in the upper surface of the machine and poured in a quantity of potatoes. He then seized the handle, gave it perhaps fifty or sixty turns, opened the anterior door already alluded to, and by a somewhat slow rotation of the handle caused a shower of potatoes, *ready-peeled*, to be precipitated into a bucket held in position for them.

*Had I been in fact a German agent I could have placed a stick of gelignite beneath the cylinder and blown the whole ingenious apparatus sky-high in a matter of seconds.* When I pointed this out to the soldier he made no observation beyond saying that it would be a good job if I did.

After this it was no surprise to me to find that I was able to walk boldly into the Officers' Mess, where four or five officers were seated round a table playing poker. "Sixpence to come in," observed a red-faced major wearing the familiar ribbon of the Cordon Bleu.

I had only fourpence on me and was therefore obliged to go out again. *This was the only occasion in the whole of my twenty-four hours as a German spy on which my right to come and go as I pleased was questioned by anyone in authority.*

I spoke to a number of soldiers about their work and one of them even allowed me to examine his rifle.

"Which end does the bullet go in?" I asked.

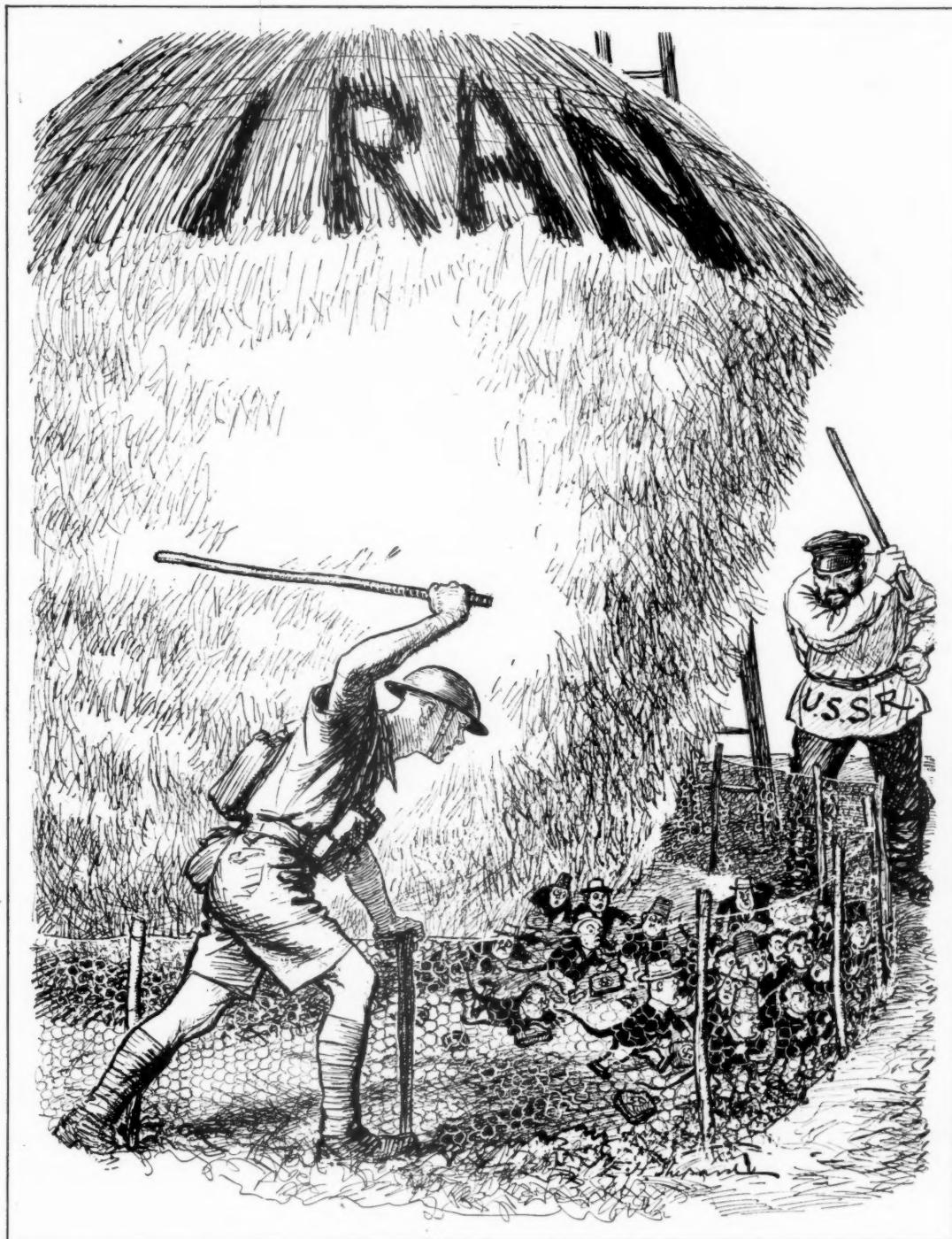
"It depends whether you're standing on your head or your heels when we open fire," was the curious reply.

I left shortly afterwards, only pausing at the gate to ask the sentry what he would do if he found a dark exotic woman with almond-shaped eyes hanging round the camp.

"Whistle," he said.

It was a relief to discover even such a rudimentary system of alarm as this in operation at the camp.

In the afternoon I visited a large factory at Y, where they make secret screwdrivers of the special type used to tighten up the tails of medium bombers. No one accosted me or asked me my business, even when I walked into the main assembly room where thousands of girl-workers were



### THE RAT ORDER

[“Liability for dealing with rats escaping from the ricks is extended by the new order from the occupier of the land to the owner of the rick.”]



*"I don't know much about Art—but I do know what I like."*

folk-dancing to music provided by the band of the Coldstream Guards.

"We find it steps-up production," said slim white-haired Inspector of Handles Tom Foster. "After an hour or two of this they go back to their work with a new relish. Look at Dorothy there," he added, indicating a tall flaxen-haired girl who was spinning past. "Last week she was a cake-decorator. Now she is turning out two hundred screwdrivers a day and only using half the quantity of glue."

I congratulated him on the splendid morale of the workers and then drew him to one side behind a pile of shavings.

"Look here," I said, "how do you know I'm not a spy?"

He seemed surprised. "Why," he said, "where's your suitcase?"

"Suitcase?"

"Yes," he said. "Didn't you know that all Nazi agents in this country carry a suitcase containing a wireless-set, a knife and a piece of German sausage?"

I was about to protest, but Tom Foster held up the typical spatulate forefinger of a master screwdriver.

"Besides," he went on, "the door-keeper has orders to

admit without question all journalists posing as foreign agents."

"But how did he know I was a journalist?" I countered swiftly.

"No one else would have the nerve to come barging straight in without so much as a with-your-leave or by-your-leave," said old Tom Foster.

His answer seemed to me far from satisfactory.

*I am sending a copy of this report direct to New Scotland Yard (Telephone Number: Whitehall 1212). H. F. E.*

○ ○

*"No German jack-boot can save Laval and his kidney."*  
"Daily Express" Leader.  
Who wants both?

○ ○

"A new licence, dated August 20, 1941, has been issued authorising the use in the manufacture of food for animals of any Wheat by-product and also of any milled Wheaten substance produced from unmillable Wheat. Millers should note that, for the purpose of this Licence, 'animals' include birds, but not cats or dogs."

*Ministry of Food Announcement.*  
They come under "Fowl" of course.

## Purchasing Power

**A**LTHOUGH I suppose it will be possible after the war to recapture the lordly and fastidious dignity with which one used to shop, I think it would be wise to practise it regularly meanwhile; otherwise it may not come very naturally to one again. The attitude, becoming more widespread as rationing increases, of "I don't want to seem greedy, and anyhow I don't suppose you've got it," is one unworthy of a nation of shopkeepers. Mr. Crabtree, who keeps the general store, may not, as he so constantly reiterates, have set eyes upon an orange for the last eleven months, but that seems to me no reason why potential purchasers should hasten from his premises blushing hotly at having mentioned the word in his hearing. Has he forgotten that only two and a half years ago I would frequent his shop regularly, asking why the Petit Royaliste Trianon biscuits had not yet arrived, since they had only to be ordered specially from an island in the French possession off Madagascar, of which I had given him the exact address?

And Mr. Crabtree would say "Ah, yes, Madam, I remember the special order well. I'm afraid they haven't quite... these uncertain mails... rather short-handed. Could we serve you with a tin of any other speciality meanwhile? We have *Petit Beurre*," he would say, as if the "Petit" must make it all much the same—"Cracker Puff, Puff Cracknel, Plain Water, Curled Water, the Bijou Wafer—"

I would say, patiently, "No, thanks, we must just wait. I'm afraid neither my great-aunt nor my first cousin consider a biscuit to be a biscuit unless it is *Petit Royaliste Trianon*."

And Mr. Crabtree, in the tone of one anxious to convince himself, would say they were bound to be here shortly. And the moment they arrived he would give me a ring, or they could certainly be delivered? "Certainly, Madam, certainly," Mr. Crabtree would say. But that was two and a half years ago; and among the many disasters for which this war is responsible I cannot but number the ruination of the character of Mr. Crabtree.

I was in his shop this morning, standing for what seemed like the better part of the day among a crowd of patient customers, who seemed passionately to wish they were elsewhere. Mr. Crabtree sat with Oriental grandeur upon a high stool behind the counter, and his face was clouded by

a dogged determination not to be caught out stocking anything in his shop which any of his customers might conceivably want. A very small soldier approached him first and said in a nervous whisper: "Cigarettes?"

"Cigarettes!" shouted Mr. Crabtree, and his loud sardonic laugh exposed the terrified soldier to the startled gaze of the onlookers. "Ha! cigarettes," he went on, gazing balefully at his victim. "Some people," he said—"or so it seems to me—do not know there is a war on." As his customer was clad from head to foot in a sweltering battle-dress and Mr. Crabtree was not, this seemed to come ill from Mr. Crabtree; but no one remarked on it. "Cigarettes!" finally concluded Mr. Crabtree, and just as the soldier was fighting to reach the door he threw a perfectly good packet of cigarettes on the counter and said, "You can take that, of course," adding morosely, "if it's any use to you."

The soldier was only too thankful to throw some silver at Mr. Crabtree, seize the packet and flee the shop, without waiting for his change. Mr. Crabtree remarked on this lucky omission by saying that some people had no head, while jerking up his eyebrows at the next customer.

A lady in blue check modestly asked that he should deliver some daily papers at her house.

"Deliver!" exclaimed Mr. Crabtree. He leant forward and scrutinized her face closely.

"You would not know, Madam, I suppose," he said, "that my boy has been called up, and my girl has been called up, and only last Wednesday the telephone rang and my nephew had to go. (Driving the bus from Patterbury Green.) That," he said, "is what people forget when they ask me to Deliver."

The lady won some admiration because, although she was already beginning—fatally—to blush, she did murmur that, living as she did in the country, the news about his nephew had unhappily escaped her; but if he could not deliver, would he set aside two papers for her?

"Keep 'em for you?" asked Mr. Crabtree. "I'll tell you, Madam. Nine o'clock of a morning this place is full of papers; ten past, there isn't a paper in the place."

"Fancy!" said the lady.

"I suppose you'll be wanting *The Times*," he went on bitterly, "or some such paper."

"Well, yes," said the lady, surprised. "That is the paper I do want."

"That's where it is," said Mr. Crabtree, and mused darkly awhile. "Of course, though we do set aside *The Times*, that's the only paper we do set aside. We don't set aside no other paper. I could throw in a picture paper with it; but that's all I could do. I couldn't do nothing else."

"But that would do perfectly," said the lady.

Mr. Crabtree looked baffled. "For all I know," he muttered, as the lady prepared to go, "the milkman could drop them papers on you of a morning. If you call that *Delivering*."

A shy young girl now inquired whether he had any sweets, chocolate, or marmalade, and was therefore easily put to flight; and he dismissed the next customer with his favourite valediction: "Things will get a lot worse yet, Madam. Good morning."

But when it came to my turn I had had enough. I approached Mr. Crabtree boldly and gazed critically about his shop. My eye fell on certain serried ranks behind his head. "I do not suppose," I said—"I do not suppose for the fraction of a second that you might conceivably be capable of providing me with a tin of custard powder?"

Mr. Crabtree looked as if I had unexpectedly revoked. "We've plenty of those," he said—"about all we have got."

I said "Can I see a tin?"

"They're all the same," he said, brightening. "You won't have no choice."

"Can I see a tin?" I repeated.

He handed me down one.

I scrutinized it from every angle. I turned it upside-down and tapped the bottom. I read the directions through carefully. I held it up to the light. I handed it back to Mr. Crabtree.

"Very much sooner, thank you," I said—"very much sooner would I struggle through my apple tart without any custard."

Having delivered this sentence successfully, I made a stately exit, only tripping once—over a small sack of beans.

It may have been a pity that Mabel should actually have met me at the door to ask if I'd remembered the tin of custard powder, because otherwise she could not make the trifle. But, as the Nazis—and we—every day exemplify, grave must be the sacrifices in the interests of prestige.

September 17 1941

## At the Pictures

## BEHIND THE DISNEY LINES

IT seems that WALT DISNEY is developing a taste for the simplest method of making a feature-length film: patchworking all the good fragments that happen to be about. To be sure I enjoyed *The Reluctant Dragon* more than *Snow White* or *Pinocchio*; but *Snow White* and *Pinocchio* were at least "works of art" in the fullest sense, with what the teachers are accustomed to call a beginning, a middle and an end. *Fantasia* was a string of eight episodes, all different, though similarly linked, and with no general pattern; and as for *The Reluctant Dragon*, the title really belongs only to the last quarter of an hour of it, in which KENNETH GRAHAME's story is told. All the rest of the picture, as you must know, is a sort of glorified travelogue about Colourful Disneyland. I enjoyed it all, but I should enjoy anything in which ROBERT BENCHLEY had plenty to do.

The announcement that the picture was to be "part live action, part cartoon" had led me to expect something on the lines of those "Out of the Ink Well" short films of twenty years ago, in which drawn characters invaded the photograph; but no. To be sure the fawn *Bambi* scampers away when he sees Mr. BENCHLEY, and *Donald Duck* exchanges back-chat with him, but each keeps to his medium. Mr. BENCHLEY blunders round the Disney hive of industry, being shown how things are done, and we are shown with him.

Besides the story of the *Reluctant Dragon* there is a complete *Goofy* episode, "How to Ride a Horse," which is very funny; and the story of "Baby Weems" in its embryonic stage of crayon drawings. The behind-the-scenes stuff is all exceedingly interesting; but I should like to raise a small point about the "Art Class," where students are shown drawing an elephant from life. Is it really true that these young people are supposed to conventionalize and exaggerate their drawings *from the model*? This smells to me of the sort of thing that is shown to the public because they are believed to expect it. The normal process is surely to work out the conventionalized

comic cartoon-character from a number of more or less "straight" sketches.

*Kiss the Boys Good-bye* (Director: VICTOR SCHERTZINGER) almost loses itself in a cloud of emotion towards the



[The Reluctant Dragon]

## THE DIFFIDENT VISITOR

WALT DISNEY  
ROBERT BENCHLEY

end, so that on a snap judgment I was inclined to agree with the comment of two Canadian flying-men whom I overheard afterwards declaring forcefully that it was corny. But most of it deserves more complimentary adjectives than that. A particularly sound influence is OSCAR LEVANT, whom I have been wanting to see and hear again ever since *Rhythm on the River*: here he is in great form in both his departments (piano-playing and acid wisecracks).

The piece is nominally an adaptation of the CLARE BOOTHE play, but I gather there isn't much left of that except the basic idea of the search for a "Southern beauty" to play the lead in a show and the finding of a not exactly genuine one. MARY MARTIN plays this part, a chorus-girl who resumes her Southern character and arranges to be "discovered" by a Broadway director (DON AMECHE) and composer (Mr. LEVANT). The story is for the most part not taken seriously at all; the whole stretch of it involving RAYMOND WALBURN as the "angel" with the money and his palatial house full of beautiful "secretaries" is complete light-hearted nonsense. It is only towards the end that we are troubled again by the old, wearisome convention that misunderstandings between lovers must never be treated lightly. On the whole, this is very good entertainment.

So on the whole is *Ziegfeld Girl* (Director: ROBERT Z. LEONARD); but this has a great deal more emotionalism and we are expected to take it all seriously, even those girl-sprinkled set pieces built up on the principle of the snail-shell so dear to The Great ZIEGFELD's heart. Furthermore, it lasts for two hours and a quarter.

The Great Z. himself does not appear in person; the story deals with three girls typically "glorified" by his characteristic system. One (JUDY GARLAND) becomes a star; another (HEDY LAMARR) gives up the stage to go back to her husband; the third (LANA TURNER), spoiled by luxury, takes the downward path. But a sort of happy ending is arranged for her too.

It is all used as an excuse for showing us scenes from ZIEGFELD productions, about six times as large as life. From time to time the camera remembers to hint that all these immense proceedings are unfolding on a stage, beneath a roof; it shows us the stage and the roof; but not for long enough to allow most of us to ponder on how colossal they must be.

R. M.



[Ziegfeld Girl]

## ANOTHER SMASH AUDITION

Pop Gallagher . . . CHARLES WINNINGER  
Susan Gallagher . . . JUDY GARLAND  
John Slayton . . . PAUL KELLY  
Noble Sage . . . EDWARD EVERETT HORTON



HARVEST HOME 1941

"Scarcity and want shall shun you;  
Ceres' blessing so is on you."



*"Mrs. Borgia thinks she'll have the ceiling just  
WHITEWASHED, Mr. Michelangelo."*

### Wheels Within Wheels

**W**E Pinwrights, as a family, have never had the slightest aptitude for machinery. And yet with this singular deficiency has always gone an intense interest in the subject. My Uncle Hubert, for instance, used to spend practically all his spare time taking musical boxes to pieces. Had he lived to-day he would have been a positive menace to cinema organs.

I myself have this family peculiarity in full measure. When I was a boy I could never ride a bicycle properly, because while riding I would keep on craning over to see the wheels go round, wondering in a vague way why they did so, until brought to my senses by a sudden collision with a wall or immersion in a muddy pond. I first heard of petrol and its properties at an early age, and I well remember trying to construct a mechanical petrol-driven sundial which would be independent of the sun and so would tell the time even on cloudy days. The attempt was unsuccessful, but it serves to illustrate my mechanical obsession.

When I was eighteen I bought a motor-cycle from the village grocer. It was a roughly square-shaped motor-cycle with a large tool-bag containing a spanner and eleven stale cheese-biscuits. From the very first these cheese-biscuits absorbed my attention. How had they come there? Were they a by-product of, say, the carburettor or the ignition system? If so, could more be produced? Was I on the threshold of a discovery which might revolutionize motor-cycle design and even biscuit-manufacture? So

absorbed was I that I never thought of trying to ride the motor-cycle. One day I accidentally sat on it; it fell to pieces, and I could never assemble it again, except long afterwards in the form of two defective cuckoo-clocks.

I have said enough. Naturally, when I was called up into the Army some months ago I was immediately posted to the Motor Transport Section of my unit—the 41st Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers. I had stated at my interview with the C.O. that I was a qualified mechanic. He seemed greatly pleased.

"We're very keen on machinery in this unit," he said, rubbing his hands. "You know—wheels and all that."

"That will suit me, Sir," I said brightly.

"Right wheel, in fact, eh?" he said, and became so convulsed with laughter that he almost broke the chair he was sitting on.

The C.O. had certainly not been exaggerating when he said they were very keen on machinery. On the following day I was paraded with the rest of my squad in front of the M.T. Sheds. Several Army trucks, in various stages of dilapidation, stood around. Captain Tramstead, the M.T. Officer, an elderly white-haired man whose Sam Browne was mended with string, gave a short address. Then at the single sharp word of command from Sergeant Lardworthy—"Mount!"—we newly-made driver-mechanics leaped to our steering-wheels. There we remained for several hours while the sergeant read the morning papers. Some of the more far-seeing of us had brought morning papers too. Others went to sleep. I myself stared hard at the crankshaft.

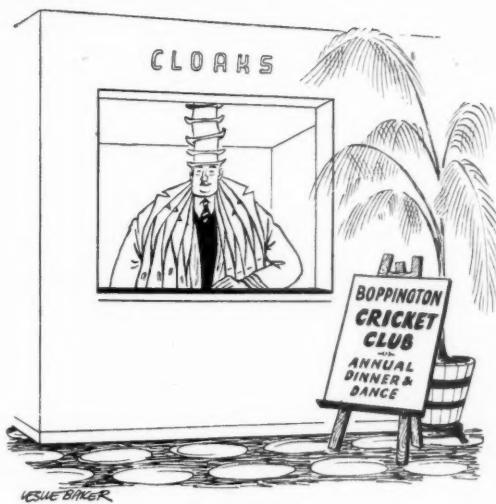
This was typical of the system of instruction under the guidance of Sergeant Lardworthy. Yet after several months of sitting behind steering-wheels I did learn several facts which intrigued me greatly. One was that if petrol were poured into an engine, that engine would be more likely to go than if petrol were not poured into it. The engine produced power, and I gathered vaguely that that power drove the wheels, always provided that there were any wheels, which with our vehicles was not always the case.

One memorable morning, while doing some running-repairs, I was pursuing this customary train of thought. If the engine could produce power, it could surely produce other things—cheese, for instance, I suddenly thought, remembering that motor-cycles (apparently) made cheese-biscuits. Why not? The idea so staggered me for a moment that I nearly swallowed the gudgeon-pin I was holding without chewing it up first.

From that moment all my activities were subordinated to one grand aim. As I sat hour after hour on an upturned petrol-tin with an old tyre round my neck to keep off the flies, Sergeant Lardworthy probably had no idea that anything unusual was going on in my mind. My outward behaviour was unchanged. If ordered to take a truckful of wire-netting or a fatigue-party to the neighbouring town, I still overturned it or them into the nearest ditch as efficiently as ever. My petrol-tank was still as innocent of petrol as my gear-box of gears. My steering-column was still bent at a sharp angle, and the mouth-organ which had fallen into one of the cylinders three months before was still there. Only in my mind were new things coming to birth.

Cheese—what and whence was it? Could it be made by electricity? If so, would the magneto or the battery-and-coil system be most likely to produce it? Would a sudden violent application of the clutch produce a splendid Stilton? I tried everything. But the secret still eluded me.

While I worked, changes were in the air. Old Captain

*The Umpire obliges.*

Tramstead, who had been in charge of M.T. for so long, was taken away one morning by two white-coated figures with a firm but sympathetic manner. Next day his successor arrived.

Captain Prodwell was quite different from the old Captain, and from the first I disliked him. He was brisk and noisy, and had a distressing insistence on what he called "efficiency." He even suggested that some of the vehicles might be made to go, provided of course that petrol could be obtained. No wonder Sergeant Lardworthy looked askance.

Captain Prodwell seemed to take an instant dislike to me. There was some slight unpleasantness on the very first day, when, seeing me looking intently into the sump of my truck through a telescope, he asked me what I thought I was doing. Of course I just stared at him in silence, and eventually he went away. I continued my experiment.

But tragedy was upon me. Suddenly Captain Prodwell ordered general inspection of all vehicles. Such a thing was unheard of. Galvanized into some sort of activity, most of my fellow-drivers made a pathetic attempt to get their vehicles ready. I was far too engrossed in my work to do anything of the sort.

The day of the inspection came. Captain Prodwell passed down the line of vehicles, poking at them here and there. An expression of angry bewilderment on his face deepened as he went on.

At last he came to my truck. He unscrewed the cap of the radiator and looked in, starting back with horror a moment later. He kicked one of the wheels. It came off. He tapped on the gear-box with his stick. Immediately a shrill squeaking came from it.

"Mice!" I said involuntarily, realizing too late that the milk I had poured into the sump the week before must have turned to cheese somewhere in the region of the gear-box.

Triumph at last! But it had come too late. At the court-martial it was decided among other things that I was unsuited to a mechanical unit. I was transferred forthwith to the Bechuanaland Camel Corps.

### GRAND CONCERT

HERE is a pleasant way of helping Army Welfare. On Sunday, September 21st, at 3 P.M. in the Royal Albert Hall, a concert is to be held in support of the Welfare Fund of the Eastern Command and London District. The Massed Bands of the Brigade of Guards and the Massed Orchestra of the Royal Air Force are to play; JOHN McCORMACK and EVA TURNER will sing; and BACH's *Concerto for Four Pianos* will be played by HARRIET COHEN, EILEEN JOYCE, CYRIL SMITH and DENIS MATTHEWS. Seats range in price from boxes at twenty, ten and five guineas, stalls at 21/- and 10/6, down to balcony seats at 2/-. Tickets and all information from the Hon. Secretary, Concert Committee, Eastern Command and London District Welfare Branch, Donington House, Norfolk Street, London, W.C.2. (Temple Bar 0321.)

### *The Editor, Dear Sir*

SURELY it would greatly encourage Romance  
And enhance  
Moonless nights if old barrage balloons  
Were softly illuminated like so many moons  
After the war.  
Tho' not before.

*"Thank you. Now then, which is MARGARET Hopkinson?"*



*"Oi! Omar Khayyām, can you direct me to the nearest oil-well?"*

### *The Vamp Test*

"Girls hire vamps to test boy-friends."—*A recent headline.*

YOUNG Susan, in the days gone by,  
Those stay-at-home and peaceful days,  
A girl could keep a watchful eye  
Over her boy-friend's airy ways,  
For, being on the spot, she had  
Some supervision o'er the lad.

But now the youth of England's out  
In billet, aerodrome and camp  
And, preyed upon by carking doubt,  
She hires, I'm told, a local vamp  
To test the young man through and through;  
Lend me an ear on this, young Sue.

One, we'll suppose, with every wish  
To strive, to struggle, and be good,  
Discovers that he's not a fish  
And fails; he naturally would;  
I don't see how the girl would score  
By getting what she's asking for.

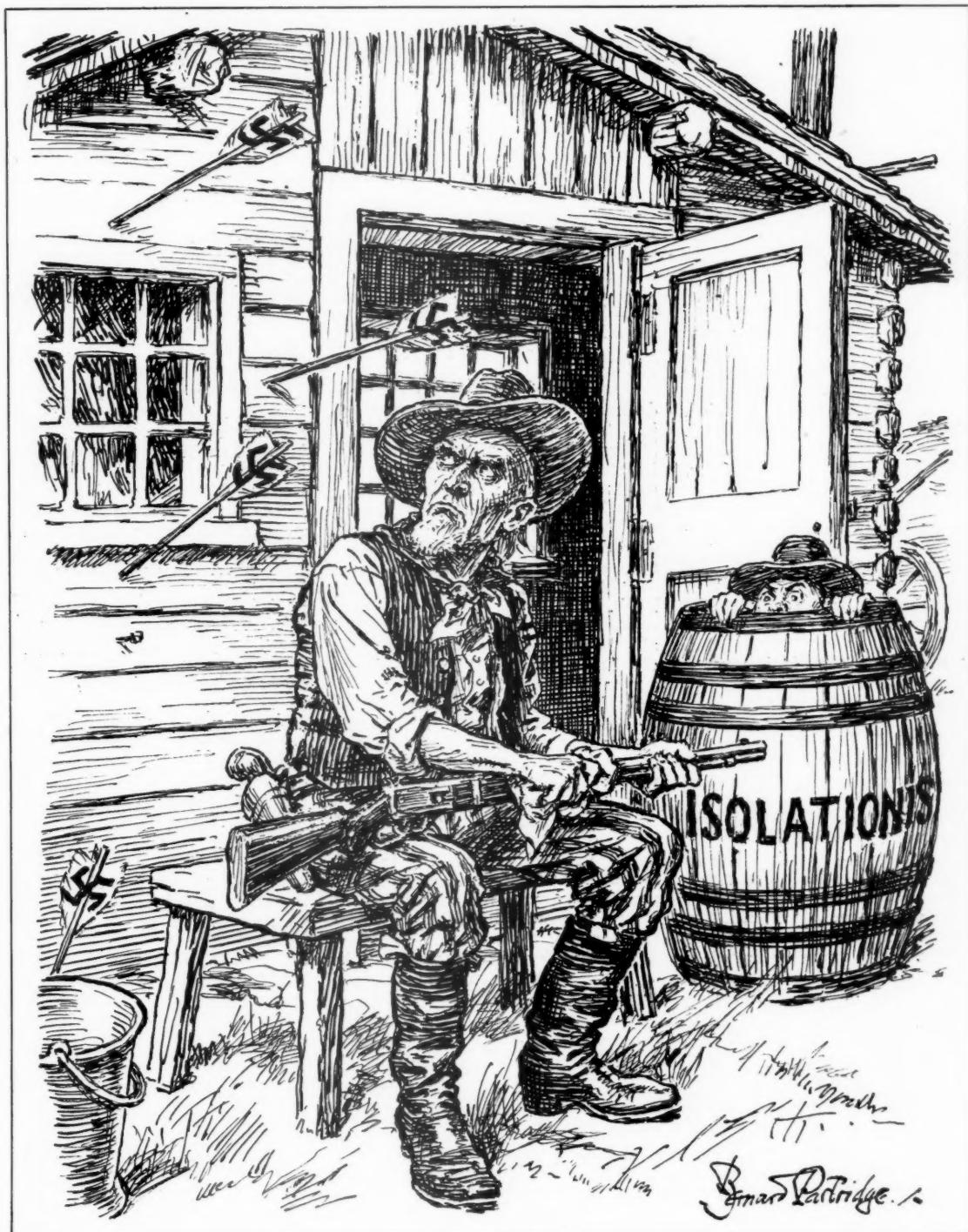
Another, clad in triple brass,  
Though the lone vamp may ply her best,  
Betrays no sign of frailty (ass)

And comes triumphant through the test;  
Would that suffuse her in a glow  
Of prideful ecstasy? Well, no.

And further, when the tidings come,  
Twould take a green and trusting soul—  
For vamps are vamps, and very rum—  
To swallow either statement whole,  
Nor would the victim who'd been caught  
Expand thereon, if I know aught.

And for a personal remark,  
Young Susan, it occurs to me  
That you yourself may nourish dark  
Suspicions of an absentee,  
And may quite possibly adopt  
The test by vamp, unless you're stopped.

Rather than that, acquire a bright  
Sweet faith towards the distant one,  
Hope that he's getting on all right  
And, if there's vamping to be done,  
Wait till the thing called leave is due  
And vamp the lad yourself, young Sue. DUM-DUM.



### AMERICA GETS OUT THE GUN.

*The Voice from the Barrel.* "You're only annoying them, Uncle. Very likely they'll go away."

## Flight-Lieutenant Fuselage and Sir Francis

**F**LIGHT-Lieutenant Fuselage and young Mrs. Fuselage had taken a little house a mile from the aerodrome with a patch of ground behind it. Flight-Lieutenant Fuselage wanted to use the Patch to grow onions and Mrs. Fuselage wanted to use it to keep ducks. They argued the toss for a week and finally came to one of those compromises so essential to happy married life. They agreed to keep ducks.

So Fuselage went to a local farmer and invested in six ducks. He didn't know anything about ducks, a fact the farmer discovered in time to point out that the market-price of duck had, in a manner of speaking, recently gone up. He also for various plausible reasons sold Flight-Lieutenant Fuselage a rather fierce-looking drake.

On her husband's triumphant return Mrs. Fuselage did a spot of raised-eyebrow stuff. Six ducks, she thought, had been agreed upon: why the drake? Drakes didn't lay eggs. Drakes, moreover, if they were anything like other representatives of their sex, cost a lot to feed. They hadn't intended to buy a drake and she didn't want a drake.

Fuselage, fully conscious of the fact that he hadn't intended to buy a drake and didn't want a drake either, replied stiffly that after considerable thought he had decided to buy a drake because he wanted a drake. He asked his wife how, supposing she were a duck—which, he tactfully added just in time, she of course was—she would like to live with five other ducks and not a single man about the Patch. Mrs. Fuselage said, Oh well, if he put it like that, and hastily changed the subject by christening the drake Sir Francis.

Sir Francis and his wives soon settled in. The ducks achieved several eggs. Sir Francis bossed them around generally and was never, never late for meals. In his eagerness to get at the eats he always trod in the trough and frequently on one of his wives' necks as well. Both from the point of view of table manners and of sympathy for women's rights, Mrs. Fuselage began to dislike him intensely.

Her dislike turned to hatred when Sir Francis developed a new habit. At any time from 5.0 A.M. onward he would wake up and feel a desire for light conversation. He would call each of his wives in turn loudly by name till he had roused the whole harem, and then they would all chew the fat

together for about two hours. He had a strong carrying voice, and as a result he generally woke Mrs. Fuselage along with the first wife and Flight-Lieutenant Fuselage with the second or third. From then on at least four or five of them were talking at once, frequently very heatedly, and sleep for the Fuselages was impossible. After a week of it Flight-Lieutenant Fuselage confessed to his wife that buying Sir Francis had been a bit of an error. Mrs. Fuselage replied, "Good, then we'll eat him, and help out the week's rations."

It's one thing to decide on roast duck (or drake): it's another to initiate the preliminary stages, such as killing said drake. For three evenings in succession did Fuselage go resolutely out to the Patch, while Mrs. Fuselage waited, fingers in ears to avoid hearing Sir Francis's last words. Tears also stood in her eyes, but—such is the nature of woman—her eyes were on the "Roast Duck" page of the Cookery Book.

The first evening, Fuselage returned after ten minutes and said, Yes, he'd caught Sir Francis but he'd let him go again: if the way to kill a duck was to wring its neck, then he wasn't the man for the job; it needed somebody who was used to wringing a thick length of garden hose. The second evening he went out with the wood-chopper and an ugly look and came back with the wood-chopper and a baffled look. He said one wanted more hands: two to hold Sir Francis's wings, one to hold his head, one to wield the chopper and probably a couple more as spares, to allow for wastage by hits outside the target area.

The third evening he went out in a resigned manner and came back in a flaming temper. He said killing a duck was altogether out of his class: he was only a simple, unskilled, ill-educated bloke who could merely fly a Spitfire. He'd have to take Sir Francis into the town and get the butcher to fix him.

Mrs. Fuselage by now had realized that Sir Francis was a big well-made bird with a chassis like a two-ton truck, and that they might get tired even of roast duck after eight successive meals. She daringly suggested that they should book Sir Francis for the following Friday dinner and ask Group-Captain Boost and his wife. It was always as well to keep in with Station Commanders and might mitigate that recent slight unpleasantness over a

collapsed undercarriage due to a bad landing. Moreover, it'd be cheap hospitality.

They rang up: the Boosts were delighted, and they both loved roast duck. So next day Fuselage took Sir Francis to the butcher. Here he was met with scorn. People, it seemed, didn't eat elderly drakes, and was Sir Francis elderly? Why, if he had had a beard the end of it would be webbed by now.

But the important guests were coming, and duck was promised . . .

Guiltily Fuselage ordered and paid for a nice young duck. Paid a lot too: duck on the slab, it seemed, cost even more than duck on the hoof. Remembering, however, the enormous cost of Sir Francis in the first place, Fuselage consoled himself by putting him into the market to be auctioned next day.

The meal at least was a success. But it could hardly be called cheap hospitality. For whatever value Sir Francis had had in the farmer's eyes must have been sentimental only. In the open market elderly drakes were a drug. He fetched ninepence, of which sixpence (minimum) was the market toll and twopence the auctioneer's commission.

And next morning at 5.0 A.M., and for many mornings after, the senior duck would wake up and cry for her departed lord. This in turn would make the others cry. One crying duck is bad: six crying ducks are hell.

They were resold to the farmer, and Fuselage discovered that the market price of ducks, like that of drakes, had, in a manner of speaking, quite recently gone down.

The Fuselages now grow onions on the Patch. However onions affect human beings, they don't make each other cry.

A. A.

### Making It Easy

Telephone message as recorded for Home Guard Battalion Commander:

"Dr. R.—rang up to say the A.R.P. will not send out any ambulances on Sunday so therefore their will be no casualties."

"Keen Educated Young Woman Wants Agriculture or Part Agriculture and Secretarial Work in Blandford or area. Three months' farm experience, good short-horn typist."

*Advt. in West-Country Paper.*

Three months was long enough.

## Impressions of Parliament

### *Business Done*

**Tuesday, September 9th.**—House of Commons: Good News for Officers; A Statement on the War.

**Wednesday, September 10th.**—House of Lords: Lord Marchwood Convoys the Entire Merchant Navy.

House of Commons: Privilege Reports Debated.

**Thursday, September 11th.**—House of Lords: Adjourns.

House of Commons: Does likewise.

**Tuesday, September 9th.**—It is Lord BEAVERBROOK who periodically exhorts the nation to "count its blessings," but it was Mr. CHURCHILL who to-day actually (and literally) undertook that interesting and instructive operation.

And what a catalogue it made! The PRIME MINISTER gave an exhaustive account of the progress of the war, from north to south, east to west, tracing the progress of this and that campaign or piece of diplomacy, the trend of events here and there. Then he pointed out to an appreciative and cheering House the items on the credit side of the beatific balance-sheet.

Starting with the heavy adverse balance of Dunkirk and all that, we had managed in little more than a year to: assemble in the Middle East large and well-equipped armies, masses of equipment and stores; develop an Air Force which was still rapidly expanding; conquer the whole of the Italian Empire in Eritrea and Abyssinia; kill or take prisoner the Italian Army of 400,000 defending the area; go far towards overcoming the U-boat and plane menace to our shipping; and organize ourselves generally to meet all comers.

A cheering balance-sheet, and one which entitled the nation to take liberties with the poet and say aloud before an awe-struck world: "We still are masters of our fate, we still are captains of our soul."

The PREMIER's survey of our far-flung battle-line was of so strictly businesslike a tone and temper that it lacked the oratorical reeking tube and iron shard which fascinate his admirers, with the result that quite a considerable number of captains (not to mention many of the majors and colonels with which the House abounds) had departed before this climax to the speech was reached.

Of tumult and shouting, there was little to die, but there was about the House an atmosphere of quiet confidence which even a carefully reiterated warning against satisfaction and com-

placency did not entirely dispel. Any dividend there may be must come after still greater efforts by all concerned.

Mr. CHURCHILL threw bouquets in unfamiliar directions, to the delight of the House, which is a very human institution in such matters and loves the "Local Boy Makes Good" line.

First, the British submarine service, blushing and doubtless murmuring (for all sub. men are talkie-fans) "Oh, skip it!" was called to the footlights to receive flowers. There was a roar of cheers as the PREMIER told of the death-defying (or, too often, death-finding) exploits of our gallant sub-

And so to a debate singularly unnoteworthy, enlivened only by a forthright speech from Mr. ROBERT CARY, demanding a big Army and introducing (to the manifest envy of the PRIME MINISTER and the puzzlement of colleagues less erudite) the word "stratocracy"—an institution which he did not want here.

Captain DAVID MARGESSON, fresh from gory battle with the Treasury, announced that family allowances for Army-commissioned ranks are to be improved. The Air Force and Navy chiefs promptly made similar concessions. It seemed little enough to do after Mr. CHURCHILL's statement of benefits received.

**Wednesday, September 10th.**—Lord LEATHERS, Minister of War Transport, making his maiden speech as a peer, had to do so in the very unhappy rôle of custodian of a deck from which all but he had fled. Clearly he did not like it. Nor did the House.

It happened thus: Lord MARCHWOOD, Master of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners, in a speech of sweetest reasonableness, had asked for the appointment of a Royal Commission to look into the status and working conditions of the Merchant Navy. His breezy Lordship is himself a certificated master mariner, and spoke with real knowledge and feeling of the lot of the seafarer, badly needed by us all, yet given no social or professional standing, no uniform, no naval decorations, not too much food, not enough pay and little or no gratitude.

Lord MARCHWOOD wanted all this put right, and the sooner the better. Why should the Navy's little sister be the Cinderella of our national services—kicked and cuffed, set to do all the dirty jobs, but denied the bright lights of the ball?

A Royal Commission, said he, would go into the whole thing and see precisely what could be done. It would, at any rate, give the Merchant men hope—which was something in these days. The men who brought us all the very means of life deserved the best we could give them.

It was an eloquent, moderate, moving appeal. Noble lords cheered loudly on their crowded red benches. It looked a "sitter." Peer after peer rose up and supported Lord MARCHWOOD. Admiral of the Fleet Lord ("Ginger Boyle") CORK AND ORRERY got quite heated over the injustices meted out to the Merchant Navy. Another Admiral of the Fleet, Lord CHATFIELD, was even more outspoken and wanted the Merchant Navy made part of the Royal Navy.



"There was a Door to which I found Some Key."—Omar Khayyám (Revised).

marine crews. It was by far the most dangerous of all our fighting Services—and there was keen competition among the men of the Navy for the privilege of serving in it. Of such is our Senior Service.

Then that even more mysterious and silent service, the anti-mine experts, came in for orchids. Day and night, in direst peril, the men of this service laboured to defeat the satanic ingenuity of the enemy with his magnetic and acoustic mines. Twenty thousand men, in one thousand ships, spent their lives saving those of their fellow-seafarers—and civilization's too.

The Salvage Service, which had saved for us 1,000,000 precious tons of shipping which might otherwise have been lost, received its posy. And last but not least, the Russians, fighting with dogged ingenuity the Nazi onslaught, deserved (and were vociferously given) the thanks of the House.



*"Of course this sort of thing wouldn't have happened if you had been engaged on some sensible form of National Service."*

Even his statement that "we must see that the nation's sea-legs were not cut from under our feet"—an acrobatic performance the vision of which almost caused Lord SIMON, Lord Chancellor, to fall, scarlet-faced with suppressed laughter, from the Woolsack—did not greatly impair the effectiveness of the plea.

Then there followed an unbroken succession of approving speeches, and even Lord STRABOLGI, whose task it was to oppose the motion for and on behalf of the Labour peers, could not refrain from assuming Tuscanian characteristics and cheering that which he opposed.

Lord LEATHERS proceeded to read a speech in which he turned Lord MARCHWOOD and Britain's Merchant Navy down flat. Nothing doing, he said, either now or after the war. The Government would do its best to see that the present machinery for the examination of grievances worked.

Lord MARCHWOOD was on him again, this time with all the honey gone out

of his tones, all the padding out of his gloves. All right, said the noble and maritime lord, resist if you like! But this thing had got to be put right, and put right it would be. So, for the time being, the motion would be withdrawn—but it would come up again, and next time . . .

The Minister went miserably from the House, uncheered.

The Merchant Navy may take heart. Not easily is Lord MARCHWOOD put off his course.

*Thursday, September 11th.*—To-day, to the discontent of many M.P.s, Parliament (having met this week for the first time for a month) adjourned again for another short recess. Why this procedure, no "stranger" can tell. It was all fixed up (one guesses) in secret session.

○ ○

#### Camouflage

"Tweed is sometimes a river and sometimes a piece of cloth."

*Schoolboy's Answer.*

#### Romanescu Returns.

"YOU look thinner, Romanescu," I said as we sat down together once more in the lounge of the "Green Man."

"Sure. Is long walk from Balkania. Somm of the jails is not so good also. Is how long since I see you? Fifteen—eteen months? I hev moch interesting things to spikk to you. I will explenn et the beginning."

"You know in June last year Balkania is very neutrel? Is necessary policy for smoll democratic contry, especially in sommer. In Balkania is privilege of generals always to hire out all the soldiers in sommer to the farmers, to the oil-fields, for building the houses, for working in the factories, end so on. So there is very strong new ministry, colled Ministry for Neutrelity. Miranos—you remember him?—he is the Minister.

"After French surrender, Ribbentrop

is very rude, say this Balkanian neutrality is too bedd, most send somm Minister to spikk of it with Hitler. Miranos is brev men. Et once he goes to Berchtesgaden.

"Ribbentrop tekk him in to see Hitler. Hitler is very nice to him, shekk hends, give him somm coffee. Hitler say: 'Ribbentrop tell me you hev erreng to blow op pellis of Turkish President next wikk. This is very kind of you. German Reich eppreciate this very moch. There is maybe somm middels I will give you for this.'

"Ribbentrop say: 'You mekk mistekk, Fuehrer. This is Miranos, Minister for Neutrality of Balkania.'

"Et once Hitler is very engry, beng on the tebble, tekk away the coffee. 'I will not hev this encirclement,' he say. 'Look et all this esessinetions in Balkania. Last month is sixteen Nazis, only fife anti-Nazis. How is this neutrality? It is encirclement.'

"Miranos explenn in Balkania esessinetions is private business, not government control. Only big men is esessinated. Nazis is so popular in Balkania, is always big men. Anti-Nazis is not so popular, not soch big men; because of this is not esessinated so moch. He promise he will spikk with private firms mekking this esessinetions, will erreng for better equality next time. Hitler say this is all right, bot he will send four penzer divisions to Balkania for holiday. After, he shekk hends with Miranos again, give him beck the coffee, bot it is too lett. Himmler hes drunk it.

"After this Balkania is full of penzer divisions. It is very difficult for democret like me, so I most pretend I like the Nazis very moch. One day Miranos come to me. 'Romanescu,' he say, 'you are now Edmirel of Balkanian Nevvy, suprimm command. It is law of Balkanian Government.'

"'What the demm!' I say. 'How is this nonsense? You know Balkanian Nevvy is on long time-charter to Mexican Government for carrying oil. How can I command soch Nevvy?' (You see, this sheeps was Grikk oil-tankers before they are Balkanian Nevvy. Of course, they are chenge very moch — cot away foremast, control-tower built op from centre-castle, many gons, pented grey, end so on—jost like *Rodney* end *Nelson*. Bot in 1938 Minister of Nevvy has fix op this long time-charter et very good retts, chenge them all beck. It is mistekk, I think.)

"Miranos say: 'Bot that is only bettlesheeps. There is cruisers *Astra Balkana* end *Principe Mikelu Giorgescu*. Lloyds' surveyor will not

pass these for charter. Also we can get you somm gonboats, perhepps. If you refuse, maybe this penzer divisions will bitt you op somtimes, I think.'

"So I most tekk commend of this Balkanian Nevvy. One day German Advising - Visitor - Edmirel - Superintendent von Goerle comm to me. 'Edmirel Romanescu,' he say, 'there is English sobmerrin now outside this harbour.'

"'Thenk you very moch, Edmirel,' I say. 'I can get crew ashore in two minutes. There is very fine dipp shelter in Callia Sophia. Is quite seff. Thenk you for warning me.'

"He say: 'What the demm! How is this about dipp shelters? I hev here somm storm-troopers is very enxious to go out in your sheep to watch you sink this sobmerrin. They are very disappointed if you do not go, I think. Maybe it is better for you to get stimm op. There is somm storm-troopers with Meischener gons now down in the engine-room will help if you like.'

"When we are cruising outside harbour, flying English flag for prection, suddenly sobmerrin comm op jost alongside. Conning-tower open end ceptain comms out. I coll out to him: 'Be careful, plizz. Don't you sink this English sheep.' He answer beck in English, bot very bedd English, jost like foreigner. 'That is all right,' he say. 'This is English sobmerrin also, from Beermingham. Plizz don't fire those gons. How is old contry when you are there next? Is good honting? Good cricket?'

"All this time storm-troopers is

getting very impetient. Storm-trooper in fore-turret he pokk his Meischener so moch et the gonner, he fire the gon. Oh, is very fine shot. Sobmerrin is long distence for soch gons, maybe eighty—honderd metres, bot he hit—beng! At once this sobmerrin sink. This gonner is so proud he fire once more at pless where sobmerrin sink end this explodd our megazinn, so we begin to sink also. It is very bedd lock.

"When we launch the boats we pick op somm of this sobmerrin crew also which storm-troopers hev not time to shoot. Sobmerrin officer explenn to me this is Itelian sobmerrin, not English. They mekk this jokk only for prection, because they think we are English sheep.

"I em very enxious about this for the German edmirel being very engry, bot I explenn to him. He say if it is not English sobmerrin maybe it is next best, bot he can give no middels for this, or only very smoll. He is very kind, very polite. Tritt me like edmirel, the semm es himself. Ivven he mekk the storm-trooper stop pokking me with Meischener gon while we are spikking—mekk him jost sit with revolver. Somm of the Germens is very nice like this."

A. M. C.

### On A. Hitler

THIS little bankrupt grew so fond  
Of getting dupes to take his bond,  
The world, despite rich Nature's rules,  
Ran very nearly out of fools.



"Do I need coupons? It's only to wear at a fire-watching party."

### At the Play

"THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA" (On Tour).

IN drama, London is now usually the belated receiver of other people's pleasures. What Manchester relished last week and Nottingham is no less enjoying this week, Shaftesbury Avenue will ultimately house and cherish. But the interval may be long, and now, less than ever, is the London playgoer the most numerous. So let me suggest to those who have the chance that this delightful revival be caught in passing. Our theatre is attempting so little now that drives deep into mind and feeling, that a play doing both and presented with the finest quality of stage-craft should certainly not be missed.

It is a veteran, of course, but like Mr. SHAW, its author, it rides the years triumphantly. And this time there are youth and beauty, as perhaps never before in its many revivals, to make *Mr. Dubedat's* observations on his *Jennifer's* appearance seem only natural and just. Miss VIVIEN LEIGH sails exquisitely into the play as it were from a SARGENT canvas (the costumes being 1906, the year of publication), and brings to it all the quick loveliness which she has lately bestowed in the studio on two less reputable beauties — Miss Scarlett O'Hara and Emma, Lady Hamilton. She also brings to the noble stupidity of *Jennifer Dubedat* a singularly clear and gracious diction, which is the more welcome at a time when the drama is often an unworthy daughter of the mother tongue. So ears as well as eyes are lavishly regaled.

And the feast of reason? How little it all dates! The male members of the cast turn out for medicine and duty in the full and formidable fig of Edwardian Harley Street. If Miss LEIGH has stepped flashing from a SARGENT portrait, these gentlemen have walked in from the Academy's Picture of the Year, one of those glossily realistic Problems-on-Canvas which used to set the public so gleefully speculating as to what sort of Bad News the cadaverous invalid was getting for his two guineas. But scarce a line of the dialogue has faded. There is a great deal of doctor-baiting, but it seems as young as Miss LEIGH herself.

The profession, one supposes, "can take it." The citadel of Harley Street has suffered other and bitter assaults since Mr. SHAW first lit it with his fire-works the better to raze it with his fire. Others have had their knives in the insatiable surgeon, others have

### BITTER WINDS AND ANGRY SEAS

THE Battle of the Atlantic finds the Navy and the Merchant Service keeping ceaseless vigil. Their efforts mean food supplies, munitions of war, protection of home, support for Forces overseas, constant watch upon the enemy—all these are dependent upon their selfless service. We shall never be able to repay our debt, but at least we can provide them with the comforts they deserve and make their winter hardships a little more bearable.

Won't you please help us? If this is your first introduction to the Fund will you please become a subscriber?

Donations will be gratefully acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

mocked the little learning and the great assurance of the Mayfair medico. But the pill has never been so well gilded as by Mr. SHAW's wit, and in this case the brilliant ridicule is very cleverly interwoven with a story which contains the never-failing dramatic values. The adoration of a bad man by a good woman, the romance and embarrassment of *Sir Colenso Ridgeon*, who allows the tender passion to affect the cool serenities of the consulting-room, and the all-too-veracious picture of an artist sworn to beauty and yet morally ugly in everything he touches, add a large heart to a delicious manifestation of the brain. Those disinclined to laugh can remain to cry. It is the most universal of Shavian plays in its appeal, and there is not a part in it which does not make the actor rejoice, so rich are the possibilities.

These possibilities are now being admirably taken. The hospital team is a very strong one. Mr. FRANK ALLENBY copes admirably with the doubts of *Ridgeon*: the gruff authority of Mr. MORLAND GRAHAM as old *Cully* is most nicely contrasted with the eloquent emptiness of Mr. AUSTIN TREVOR'S "*B.B.*" Mr. TREVOR is by no means an obvious candidate for

the glorious rôle of this suave monarch of an unctuous bedside manner. He has to hide his own natural acuteness, and to do so creates a masterly portrait of a volatile and posturing pomposity.

Mr. GEORGE RELPH adds a really poignant study of the failure, *Blenkinsop*, whose humble excellence of spirit shines like a quiet candle amid the profession's more imposing luminaries. In the Arts Class Mr. CYRIL CUSACK gives a very likely picture of genius earning a bad report.

In our charitable way we nowadays define specialists as "people knowing more and more about less and less." But no taint of any knowledge touches the grand vacuity of Mr. SHAW's "*B.B.*" The specialists know nothing about anything, except old *Culley*, who knows that ignorance is eternal and need not be fatal, and *Ridgeon*, who gets a title by mistake. But the satire never turns sour. It enlarges and enlivens as "*B.B.*" stimulated the phagocytes—at least in his confident fancy. Add the radiance of Miss LEIGH to the ratiocinations of the medical faculty, and *The Doctor's Dilemma* sets a problem for the public, namely, how to squeeze inside the packed building where doctors are so majestically disagreeing. I. B.

### The Fourth Form Takes It.

"GOSH, what marvellous fun!  
That's a Blenheim."  
"No, it's a Westland Lysander."

"No, it isn't. I'm not contradicting you, but it absolutely isn't. I know it's a Blenheim."

"No, it's not. Oh, yes, it is. That's right. A Blenheim. It's going to dive-bomb."

"Gosh, how heavenly! Real bombs?"

"Of course not, idiot. That lorry buzzing along High Street has got some pretence bombs and it's going to strew them about and we've got to pretend they've been dropped by the Blen."

"Yes, that's right. Gosh, look at it diving now! If we'd been standing on that roof we'd have been knocked over by it."

"No, we wouldn't."

"Yes, we would. At least if we'd been standing on step-ladders we would."

"I say, aren't those boys from



*"I can remember the days when this bit of London was entirely uninhabited."*

St. Horrabin's lucky?—they're the casualties. They're all lying about like anything, waiting to be picked up by the ambulances."

"Gosh, they are lucky!"

"Gosh, look at all those soldiers!"

"That one's frightfully like Tyrone Power."

"There's one who's a bit like Leslie Howard."

"I say, when do we put on our gas masks?"

"Not till they've let off those little gas generators, and then it'll all come up like a fog and we shall start crying, with tears *pouring* down our faces. Anne and I are going to see how long we can bear it before we put our gas masks on."

"What an absolutely marvellous idea!"

"Oh gosh, isn't that funny! Did you see that? That A.F.S. chap has dropped his end of the fire-hose! Look, look, look! It's zig-zagging like mad all over the place!"

"Gosh, how divine!"

"It's absolutely *exactly* like a cobra, or a worm or something."

"They're running after it like mad. Gosh, I shall die if I don't stop laughing. Hee, hee, hee!"

"Hee, hee, hee, hee, hee!"

"Why doesn't the chap turn off the water?"

"He's in a *complete* flat spin, that's why. I bet you would be too."

"I bet I wouldn't."

"Hee, hee, hee! It's *broken* a window!"

"Heavens, how marvellous!"

"I absolutely think this is funnier than anything I've ever seen in my life. I've got the most frightful pain from laughing."

"So've I—hee, hee, hee!"

"Gosh, I absolutely believe those are the gas things going off. Fancy if we'd all forgotten our gas masks! Wouldn't it be a scream?"

"Let's not put them on till we absolutely can't bear it."

"Oh gosh!"

"The soldiers are in *fits*. The one

who's a bit like Donald Duck said 'Don't cry, dear,'"

"That was me he said it to."

"It absolutely wasn't. It was me."

"Hi! That's a bomb you're walking into!"

"So it is! Hee, hee, hee, how frightfully funny! Fancy if it'd been a *real* one!"

"Look, I simply *must* put on my gas mask now. I shall die if I don't."

"Okay, so'll I."

\* \* \* \* \*

"And far the funniest thing was an A.F.S. man who got his hand hurt, absolutely really! And he got taken away by the *wrong* ambulance and all the First Aid people kept on trying to make out that he had a broken leg, and they never even noticed that he'd cut his hand on the glass of that *marvellous* broken window. Gosh, it was funny! Isn't it a shame it was all over so soon? The whole practice only lasted about three hours or something. I could have gone on for *days*."

E. M. D.

## Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

### Wings

In a most satisfactory strain of competent authority, rejecting alike extravagant rumour and vague surmise and illuminating his text with a few sharp bursts of sheer excitement, Mr. DAVID GARNETT tells of the men and the machines, the battles and the individual adventures that make up the story of the *War In The Air* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 7/6). "One parachutist seen floating over the Sussex Weald," he declares, "brings more understanding than a page of statistics." One may agree, yet in his chapters it is possible to live over again the glories of Dunkirk and the Battle of Britain, to see great France betrayed and defeated for lack of just a little preparation of her civilian population, to follow the early flights over Germany of our pilots dropping the despised leaflets that may yet prove to have put the truth where it was most needed, and to watch the growth of the power that now is shadowing Germany by day and dark. Mr. GARNETT deals in effects of contrast. He notes, for instance, how a flying-boat on patrol in the Atlantic, out of sight of land and without wireless "fixes" for seven or eight hours, was able to fly straight to a spot where a ship was sending out a call for help; and later he tells how the Italian battleship *Cesare* was mistaken for a British vessel and severely damaged by Italian airmen in their most successful attack of the war, the pilots afterwards being chased round Genoa by Italian sailors, knife in hand.

If in narrative the writer can find a way subtly to augment those tremendous emotional pressures that we as a nation keep hard down under control, using them to drive the war machine, in comment and criticism he does much to relieve the occasional recurrent doubt as to the means being adopted to hasten the ultimate victory. His frankness as to mistakes made and ground lost is more reassuring than much vague eulogy. Emphasizing the great enemy superiority in output of planes not only before the war but for many months after it started, he is satisfied that if our designers spent long in the drawing-office the quality of our machines abundantly repaid the delay; and contrasting the torrential but ill-directed German bombing of houses and hedgerows with the proved deadly accuracy of the Royal Air Force's search for real targets, he declares that the one thing he fears is a surrender to public clamour for an attack



"'Im? Journalist collectin' material.'"

on the enemy population. There is more precise information here that he would love to give us if he might. The great names of TRENCHARD and SALMOND fill him with enthusiasm for the leaders who went far to atone for the blindness of eminent politicians and journalists unable to see the storm ahead, for it was they who laid down the lines on which the officers and men of the Air are chosen—skilled technicians distinguished in civilian life by their unassuming earnestness, even by their gentleness. He compares them with GOERING's blundering navigators, loving to spray bullets into crowds of fugitives. In the comparison is the difference between two worlds, intellectual no less than moral. This is a most notable and satisfying piece of writing, as timely as it is reliable.

### Victoria Takes a Curtain.

Mr. LAURENCE HOUSMAN was not the first—nor will he be the last—to discover that, given sympathetic showmanship, VICTORIA (R. et I.) may be trusted to provide comedy—benign and touching in the humane Shakespearean tradition—for her less regenerate descendants. The gentle ridicule she is allowed involuntarily to bask in throughout the dozen playlets that constitute *Gracious Majesty* (CAPE, 8/6) in no way detracts from her dignity; and the shrewdness that succumbs (usually for its own good) to the blandishments of DISRAELI at Balmoral is also seen getting the better of BISMARCK at Charlottenburg. There is perhaps too much of equerry JOHN BROWN. The excess, however, is true enough to life, as is the cruelty of the Birmingham episode, in 'eighty-seven, when the Queen publicly refused to receive a mere City Coroner. One of the prettiest of the plays deals with the pre-arranged meeting, at Dean and Lady AUGUSTA STANLEY's, with Mr. CARLYLE—when the basis of understanding was not the sage's unread tomes but a common bereavement; and the wider implications of the reign emerge in the famous encounter of "BERTIE" and "WILLIAM" at Osborne. Mr. ERNEST SHEPARD's charming pictures sustain the endearing period flavour of a very delightful book.

### To-day in Ireland

Those of us who loved Ireland but know little of Eire, especially since she became a neutral, will probably open *The Quiet Place* (METHUEN, 7/6), a new novel by Mrs. D. M. LARGE, rather as though it were a letter containing news of a beloved prisoner. It is pleasant to find from its pages that Eire is still fundamentally Ireland. Its people still talk and think very much as they did, except that "the Border" has given the "most distressful country" a new grievance, and that when possible invaders are mentioned the phrase "Whoever they happen to be" is always added, leaving the rôle open both for Ulstermen and Germans. Mrs. LARGE's story is the simple one of how the two *Misses O'Hara* turned their big old country home into a haven for harassed English people as paying guests, to the advantage of both parties. There are many people in the story, Irish and English, and many of them very attractive. Mrs. LARGE is, as readers of *Punch* will know, particularly good at drawing humorous but not exaggerated portraits of Irish country characters.

### Hugh Walpole Aftermath

They come back rather as revenants—the ghosts of the more vigorous characters of their creator's prime—these somewhat eerie men and women of Sir HUGH WALPOLE'S



## GRIT

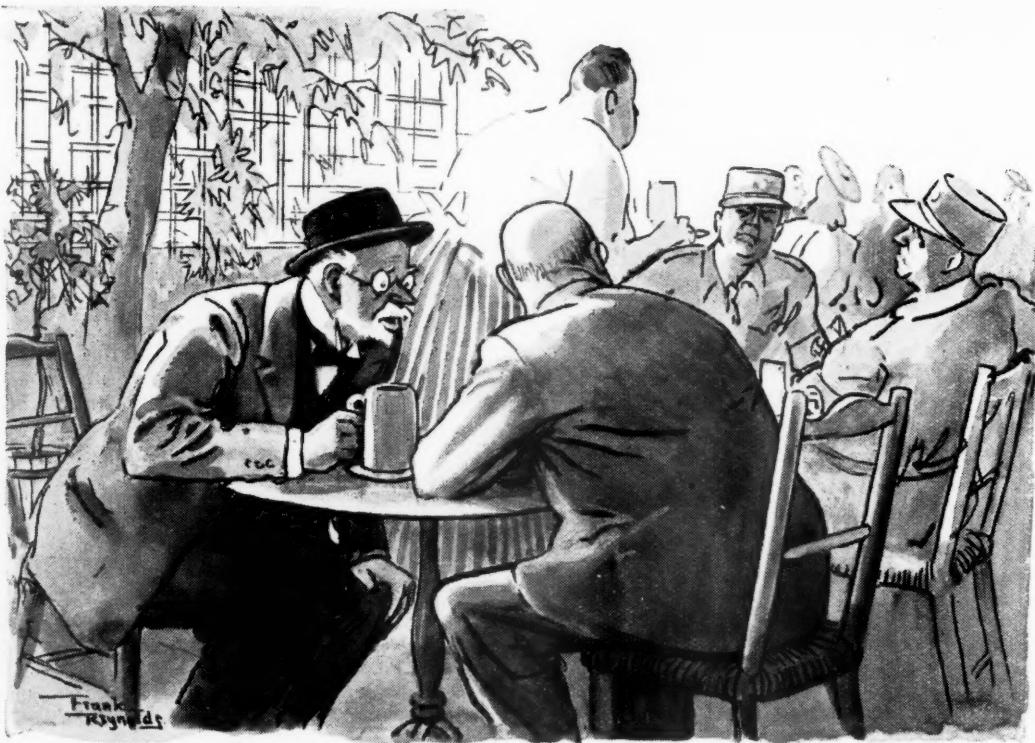
THE MORNING AFTER THE ZEPPELIN RAID IN OUR VILLAGE

G. L. Stampa, September 22nd, 1915

posthumous Gleeshire novel. But it is perhaps because the self-centred misgivings of a war-victim are the unhappy staple of *The Blind Man's House* (MACMILLAN, 8/6) that one misses, and poignantly, the loftier outlook that rendered *Roman Fountain* a triumph and something of a portent. Here, however, is almost the last of the authentic WALPOLE in two familiar aspects: the monger of rather ominous mysteries and the genial portrayer of children and dogs. Blind Julius Cromwell and his temperamental wife come to live in Gleeshire; Julius's faithful housekeeper is pestered by a criminal son constantly peering through her bedroom window; Julius himself employs a local Don Juan as factotum; and Mrs. Brennan, the rector's wife, exhibits a vulture-like rapacity for domestic affection.

The rest are chorus and victims—the principal victims being the Brennan children and their mongrel "Benson." It is, unluckily, the book's chief motives which are the least convincing as well as the least attractive; but the little Brennans and "Benson" are superbly drawn and enjoyable from start to finish.

Mr. Punch welcomes another book by one of his contributors—this time of collected work from these pages. *We're All In It* (COLLINS, 5/-), described as "A Picture from *Punch* of the Times we Live in," contains SILLINCE's *Punch* drawings arranged chronologically and dated from September 1938 to the end of 1940.



*"From which side did last night's thunderstorm arrive?"*

## Our Piece Terms

By Smith Minor

MOST people read for pleasure, whether they get it or not, but sometimes they read for prophet, which is what I hope you will do when reading what I am now going to write. Mind you, I'm not saying you won't get a laugh *ici et la*, as the French would say, but the subject is dead serious, in fact the hole future of the world depends on it, so don't expect to read about old men running after their hats, or sneezing out their false teeth, or anything funny like that.

It began by my happening to say to Green one day,

"Of course we'll win, but what's going to happen afterwards?"

"I shall buy a bottle of ginger-pop and get thoroughly drunk," he said.

"I don't mean that," I said, "I mean what's going to happen to the world?"

"Oh, I see," he said. "Well, that'll depend upon the piece terms, won't it?"

"All right," I said, "then what are the piece terms going to be?"

"I've promised not to tell," he said.

"Don't be silly, I'm serious," I said. "You don't know them."

"If I don't know them, why ask me what they're going to be?" he said. "But I know what they *ought* to be."

"What?" I said.

"We *ought* to make millions of enormous ink-pots with very wide openings," he said, "and fill them with green ink, and drop every German in upside down."

"I don't agree," I said. "They wouldn't all deserve it."

"Who wouldn't?" he said.

"Well, old Schmuttsunk," I said.

"Once I spotted him giving sixpence to a beggar."

"Well, excepting Schmuttsunk," he said, "all the rest. What do you think the piece terms ought to be?"

"I haven't quite decided," I said, "which was true, I hadn't then, though I have now."

And then Dawson (he's another boy) came along who happened to have heard us, and he said,

"Why not divide Germany into twelve bits, give eleven bits away, and leave her one?"

"Why leave her one?" said Green.

"Oh, come," I said.

This led to a heated argument in which some others joined, they coming along to see what was the matter, and the upshot of it was that we decided

\* Our pre-war German Master. Author.

to have a Publick School Debate to thrash the matter out.

The first thing we did was to put up a notise, wich ran, viz., i.e.:—

#### PIECE TERMS

##### WHAT SHALL THEY BE?

###### Speakers :

P. P. Dawson	F. L. S. H. Pym
W. L. Green	J. Smith
B. Marjoribanks	O. Tooley

Time	Place
Next Friday	Squash Court
12.32	(sic)

ROLE UP IN YOUR  
THOUSANDS  
AND VOTE!

I ouht to explane that the names of the speakers are not in their order of merrit (as I hope you will see), but we desided to put them alphabetically to save any fealing, and of corse the "sic" means douteful. But it was all right, the Sports Master saying we could have the Squash Court in these rather cleaver words, i.e., "Why not, a Squash Court is used to rackets." His name is Hobbs, but he's not the one. WOULD that he were!

Well, anyhow, at last next Friday came, that is it was next Friday then, thoght not now, and at 12.32 the Squash Court was certinly squashed, in fact you could hardly breathe, let alone speak, and when I thort that eyre long I woud be getting up and making a speach, not being good at it,

"One's stummuch got a funny fealing  
To see boys packed from floor to  
cealing,"

and not only boys, but one or two masters. Luckerly we were alreddy in the six chairs we'd put for ourselves at the end we were going to speak from before the audience arrived, or we'd never have got there.

We had to begin by calling Order, and when we'd nearly got it P. P. Dawson arose and said, "Ladies and Gentlemen," and someone called "Where are the ladies?" and everybody laufhed, so then Green called, "Where are the gentelmen?" and everybody cheared, and I saw it was going to be dificult. In fact the chearing went on so long that at 12.37 I got up and said,

"Fair play! Be British!"

And, lo! there was silense! (NOTE. I've found out that if ever anyone is doing what one shouln't; one only has to say, "Be British," and one stops. End of note.)

Well, you've got to admit it was a

bad start, but once we got going and they knew we were serious they listened to us with what is called wrapped attenshun, though mind you there were plenty of interuptions, in fact sometimes the interuptions were more than the speaches. However, the reader will see from what follows that the audience stoped ragging and soon became as kean as we were, so, well, now for what follows.

P. P. Dawson got up again, this being about the fifteenth time, and now he said,

"Gentelmen! You are about to hear six people give their ideas about what to do with the measley Germans after they have been made to bite the bitter dust, and as I am one of the people here is my idea, wich is to carve Germany up into severel slices and to give one slice to each of the occupied countries, leaving one over, the smalest, for Germany herself."

SOMEONE: "But suppose England hasn't been occupied, aren't we to have a slice?"

P. P. DAWSON: "Do we want a slice of that fowel country?"

THE SOMEONE: "Then will the others?"

P. P. DAWSON: "Oh."

Then P. P. Dawson sat down, and W. L. Green got up.

"We have just listened to Mr. Dawson's stirng speach," he said, "and I woud like to deal with the question he was asked, as he didn't. Do we want a slice of Germany? As it now is, no. But as we could make it, yes." (Cheers.) "So my idea, gentelmen and others, is that we slice Germany up without leaving one slice over for Germany, but take it our-selves."

SOMEONE: "Then where will Germany be?"

W. L. GREEN: "What?"

THE SOMEONE: "You heard."

W. L. GREEN: "It won't be anywhere." (Cheers.) "It will be snuffed out as the flame of a candel." (More cheers.)

Then Green sat down, and one could see that most of the audience were ready to vote for his idea before they'd heard any more. But when B. Marjoribanks got up I expekt one or two wondered if they were going to hear anything better, becouse Marjoribanks's cricket avarage is 43·66, and he can also bowl a bit. I think it will interest the gentel reader, unless he or she alreddy knows it, but some don't, that the name of Marjoribanks is not pronownced as it is spelt, you pronownce it Marshbanks, honestly, and you can remember it if you learn the folowing poem by Green, i.e.:

"My checks are not honored," cried Marjoribanks.

"What teribly, teribly harjoribanks."

Well, anyway, this is what B. Marjoribanks said:

"Gentelmen! You have just heard the well-ment speach of our friend Mr. Green, and some of you seem to have been empressed with it, but what I want to say is this. You can get rid of Germany, all right, but what are you going to do with the Germans?"

SOMEONE: "Get rid of them too."

B. MARJORIBANKS: "What, sixty millions of them?"

THE SOMEONE: "There won't be sixty millions by the time the war's over."

B. MARJORIBANKS: "Well, fifty million."

THE SOMEONE: "There won't be that."

SOMEONE ELSE: "No, we've got to get rid of the lot!"

ME: "Come, gentelmen, please be resonable."

THE SOMEONE: "It won't be resonable if we leave a single one."

THE SOMEONE ELSE: "Or half a one."

SOMEONE ELSE ELSE: "Or even an eyelash."

They went on like that untill it got down to the shaddow of a funnibone, and then a master said let Marjoribanks continue, and Marjoribanks continued:

"Well, gentelmen, all your sugestions are very interesting, but they make no difference, and you will find that after the war there will be a hole heap of Germans left, and they will have to go somewhere. So this, gentelmen, is my own sugestion. They shall be taken to some unhabited spot, like a large island or a desert or the Arcktic, and they will all stay there untill they die nacherally, and then their children will be taken back to Germany, wich we will have looked after in the meanwile."

THE MASTER: "But suppose, Marjoribanks, the children grow up like their parints?"

B. MARJORIBANKS: "In that case, sir, they will remember what hapened to their parints, and will think twice."

One had to admit his idea was good, and I could see some of them thort it better than Green's, but it wasn't over yet, there were three more speakers to come, and the next one was F. L. S. H. Pym, who has no eyebrows, not that you nead them to speak with, but I thort I'd menshun it. Another curiouus thing about this Pym is that he can crack his nuckles one after another, doing both hands in  $3\frac{1}{2}$  seconds, I've timed him. "What has this to do with

Piece Terms?" the reader may ask. If he or she does, then the answer is nothing, but it seems to me that when you come upon anything unusual like, well, this nuckle-cracking, it makes your article more interesting to stick it in.

Well, anyhow, F. L. S. H. Pym got up and said,

"It's no good looking forward until you've looked back. Take the Battle of Bannockburn, 1314, or of Flodden, 1513, or of Sticklestadt, 1030, or Waterloo, 1815, or Magnesia,\* where Scipio defeated Anti-ogres, or even the last Great War, what happened? Were they the last war? No! Did they stop others? No! Were their Piece Terms of any use? No! So what I say is, look back at all the Piece Terms there have ever been, and then try something different."

B. MARJORIBANKS: "Well, isn't my idea different?"

F. L. S. H. PYM: "So would it be to put Hitler through a sossidge machine."

SOMEONE: "That would be a jolly good idea."

F. L. S. H. PYM: "But would it stop war?"

SOMEONE ELSE: "Well, what would stop war?"

THE SOMEONE: "Yes, we're here to find out what to do, not what not to do."

F. L. S. H. PYM: "I will leave that to the next speaker."

And, of course, I was the next speaker.

Now I don't want the reader to think that because I can write (a bit) I can also make speeches, as a matter of fact I'm rotten at it, anybody will tell you, and as my turn drew nearer and nearer I got fairly in a dish of sweat. Would that the floor would open and swallow me, as they say. But all of a sudden a most extraordinary thing happened, don't ask me to explain it. The place I was in vanished, and all became a mist, and then at first I seemed to be in a vast graveyard with millions and millions of grave-stones, and then, after another mist, I seemed to be in the House of Commons, honestly, and all around me were Churchill and Eden and Atlee and Beaven, in fact, all the lot, even Roosevelt, listening eagerly to what I was saying, and lo! too, I was saying it! I don't remember getting up. I just found myself up, with words pouring

out of me from an Unknown Source as water through a tap. And this is what I heard myself saying, mind you, I may not have got it exactly, but this was the ghost:

"My friends" (I said). "Yes, that is what I am calling you, because are we not here to try and stop all enmity for aye, and how can we stop big quarrels unless we begin by stopping our little ones,"

"Thus showing in our gentle hearts  
That we too want to play our parts,"

mind you, it won't be easy, for what do we find around us, nay, in fact, what do I find in me, well, I will tell you some of the things, not all, there are too many, but some, i.e. (1) selfishness, what happens when I am waiting for a bus, do I not rush to get on first, pushing other people, even old ladies, away so that I may get the front seat? (2) vanity, now no one would think I was vain to look at, and yet I often boast in a quiet way hoping no one will notice it, (3) cruelty, what of the chicken I eat, that is, when I do, does it not want to live as much as me, (4) lying, I counted once and found I told four a day, not big ones I grant you, but small ones, like "I'm sorry I didn't answer, sir, but I got a crum in my throat," when really I didn't answer because I couldn't think what to say, my mind often goes blank, I feel it'll go blank now if I stop, well, things like that, so how can we improve the world unless we improve ourselves too, how can we make it a fit place to live in until we make ourselves fit to live

in it, if you know what I mean, mind you, one knows the Germans are worse than us, my hat, yes, don't imagine I don't know that, why, just to think of Gobbles makes you want to put, say, an egg-whisker in his fowl mouth, and whisk it, but there must be *some*, well, mustn't there, who once the Yolk was off would be glad to join us in this vast work of Improvement, why, think of old Schmuttsunk, he would if one could find him, once he gave sixpence to a beggar, wait a minute, where am I?"

I had to stop, because my mind was beginning to go blank like I'd said, and I felt myself getting rather hot and, well, emoshunal, I believe it was menshun Schmuttsunk through it may have started before. I don't suppose you ever met Schmuttsunk, though he had some time off. He was a nice old chap, honestly. Anyhow all at once the blank went, and I got back again, and I went on, i.e.:—

"My friends, thank you for waiting so kindly, I know now where I was, that is, am, anyhow, these are my Piece Terms, i.e., we devide the Germans into those who want to empove the world with us and those who don't, and we let those who do still have Germany, or some of it, and we send those who don't to some other place, don't ask me where, I can't do everything, and then you can take it from me

"The world once more would blossom  
clean

And be again like it had been,"

nay, better, in fact one day we might wake up in our beds to find it all different, and kind, and all that, I can't explain what I mean, in fact, I feel rather queer, in fact, my mind's going blank again, I'm sorry——"

And then lo! all was blotted out.

Don't think I died, but I just got a bit of a fever, and it wasn't until the evening that I really felt up and coming again, as they say, and even after that people avoyded me for a bit, because I'd ended the meeting and, if you want the truth, they thought I was off my dot. Perhaps I was, you never know yourself, do you, but just in case there was anything in my idea I thought I'd write about it. You see, if Mr. Churchill comes across it, and he's bound to read *Punch*, because sometimes there are pictures of him in it, he might think it at least good enough for a bassis.

But it was bad luck on O. Tooley.

\* The place not the drink. Author.



"Devon—DEVON! D for doughnut,  
E for enterprise, V for—V for . . . ?"